Drugs network in the country .

2323. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of heroine seized by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRl) since January, 2001;

(b) whether Government are aware of the news-item which appeared in the Indian Express dated the 2nd November, 2001 that DRI has busted a drug network having links with Pakistan;

(c) if so. the details of seizures and arrests made in this regard; and

(d) the efforts made by Government to prevent smuggling of drugs into the country from Pakistan and other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE: (SHRI GINGEEN. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) 170.97 kgs. of heroin valued at Rs. 5.40 crores have been seized by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence since January. 2001 (upto November, 2001).

(b) and (c) No such news-item has appeared in the Indian Express dated 2nd November. 2001. However, seizure of 15 kgs. of heroin smuggled from Pakistan valued at Rs. 48.75 lakhs has been made by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence on 25-10-2001. 2 Indians have been arrested in this connection.

(d) All field formations under the Customs Department including Directorate of Revenue Intelligence are alert and vigilant and continuous and concerted efforts to develop operational intelligence are being made by them to prevent smuggling of contraband goods including narcotic drugs into the country' from other countries including Pakistan.

Financial package to Himachal Pradesh

2324. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any.plan to grant financial package to Himachal Pradesh on the pattern of North East;

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be granted; and

(c) if not. what are the constraints coming in the way of Government in doing so?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE : (SHRI BALAS AHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) There is no plan under consideration of the Government to grant a financial package to Himachal Pradesh on the pattern

of North East. However, the Annual Plan of the State Government of Himachal Pradesh has been finalised by the Planning Commission after taking into account the overall resource availability of the State. Central Assistance of Rs. 1521.08 crores has been allocated for the Annual Plan of Himachal Pradesh including Special Plan Assistance of Rs. 200 crores and Additional Central Assistance of Rs. 115 crores.

Rate of Interest on Small Saving Schemes

2325. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering to reduce rates on small savings schemes including national savings certificates, post office schemes and RBI bonds as well as eliminating the various tax exemptions that these schemes currently enjoy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also considering to stop transferable certificate like Kisan Vikas Patra as it had become storehouses for large chunks of unaccounted black money;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) No proposal of either revision of interest rates or reduction of tax benefits on various small savings schemes and Relief bonds of the Reserve Bank of India is under the consideration of Government, at present. However Reddy Committee's recommendations on interest rates and tax treatment of small savings schemes will provide an input to Government's approach on the subject.

(c) to (e) No proposal of discontinuance of Kisan Vikas Patra Scheme is under the consideration of Government, at present.

Special International Investment Fund

† 2326. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.